Surára
Pakidái

/10 cont./

114 142 is true, the related Surára and Pakidái, as well as the Waiká in the catchment area of the upper Orinoco, embody a type that is strange to us (see Ills. 9-24 /see pp. 270-274/ and ills. in Zerries, 1959), but certainly not one that is repulsive to that extent.

342

VI. Technology and Material Culture

1. House Forms

The Surára and Pakidái are familiar with four different house-forms. The simplest and probably the earliest form, which at present, however, is used only as overnight quarters by one family during the expeditions in the virgin forest, is similar to a wind-screen /Windschirm/ (Ill. 4). It is built in the following way: In front, one or two supports, 2-2.50 meters long, are set into the ground at intervals as long as a hammock; about three meters behind these there are two weaker supports, 1-1.50 meters long, at somewhat longer intervals. The upper ends are joined together with poles; cipó-titca (a type of liana) serves as lashing material. The poles are also frequently tied to trees standing a short distance apart, instead of the rear supports. Over this 12 to 15 thinner poles are placed crosswise, and on top of these four to six are placed lengthwise. This results in a more or less steep frame-[824] work which has the shape of a lean-to roof (Ill. 4). Palm leaves are laid on this so that the hut gives secure protection against the rain; even the most severe tropical thunderstorms cannot [352] harm the Indians sleeping under it. The hammocks are fastened [354] in the form of a triangle around the fire burning in the center; In the case of larger families, two hammocks often hang one above the other.

361 /11/ If the entire tribe is on the march, the huts of the individual families are always placed in a circle around the chief's hut standing in the center, after the virgin forest has been hastily cleared to a certain extent beforehand. The space between the huts is five to eight meters.

342 /14 cont./
592 Under these windscreens the families live, one beside the other. The space for each family amounts to three to four meters. In the center burns the fire, which is kept going day and night.
● 354 To the right and left of it hangs a hammock each for the man
352 and the woman (Ill. 29). In the case of larger families, the
592 hammocks are hung around the fire in a triangle and, if neces-
342 sary, one above the other. In the latter case, the chief wife always sleeps below and the man above, while the second wife and the older children, or the grandmother, lie in the hammocks
353 on the opposite side of the fire. Above and behind the hammocks
342 the implements, bows, arrows, quivers, knives, baskets, etc.,
231 are hung on the roof framework. In addition, most families
342 have a square or rectangular wooden framework set up far in the background, which is about one meter high, one-half to at most one meter long, and is provided with side walls 30 to 50 centimeters high, in which the young dogs sleep, the so-called
[174] dog-bed (Ill. 30). Whether this arrangement is indigenous or was taken over from Karaiben /Carib/ tribes some time in the past could not as yet be determined. According to a statement
[171] by the German Franciscan monk, Protasius Frikel, of Santarem, similar dog-beds are also in use among the Karaiben tribes on the Rio Trombetas (53).

53. Personal statement by P. Frikel on the occasion of the XXXI. Int. Amerik. Kongr. in São Paulo, 1954.

342 The chief's hut obviously owes its origin to the model of the
622 huts of the planters, and rubber and palm-fiber gatherers. It
[177] has a rectangular ground plan, the broad side is turned toward the courtyard, and it is also open on this side. The length is 9.70 meters, the width six meters, and the height, exactly the same as the windscreens, about six meters. In the center stand four posts five meters long, at both the front and back four smaller ones, each of which is 2.55 meters high. The small

/14 cont./

342 622 posts are joined by crossbeams; in addition, horizontal strips lead to the tall posts, whereby a gable roof is formed. Over this again lie small, thin cross-strips, on which, exactly as in the case of the large windscreens, the panos, the rectangular palm-leaf mats, are fastened. In the same manner, the rear wall and the two side-walls are also provided with panos. Between the two ends of the front side there are fastened three poles half a meter high, which are often used as sitting places. The entrance, which is one meter wide, is on the right-hand narrow side. The fire burns in the center of the hut, and in a triangle around it are fastened the hammocks in which the chief, his two wives, and the children sleep. All the implements hang on the crossbeams and on the plaiting of the rear wall.

[354] [352] [353]

343 To the right, next to the chief's house, stands a small, open hut which is four meters long, two meters wide, and six meters high. Here, too, the roof has a gable-shape and is likewise covered with panos made of ubim leaves. Under the roof is found a latticework pen about 1.60 X 2 meters, which is used as a rooster coop.

342 From an architectural standpoint, this open, almost circular construction, in which, to be sure, the chief's hut and the coop for the roosters form two foreign bodies added later -- represents an unexcelled method of building, particularly for this hot, tropical region. The circular shape prevents the wind from entering, and the rain, too, cannot reach the families living in the dead angle under the roofs. Moreover, there is always pleasantly fresh air, so that even upon leaving this maloka there is no danger of catching cold. Tribes or groups living in closed malokas are much more subject to respiratory ailments when they leave the warm community house and step out into the cool morning or night air. This maloka of the Surára may doubtless be regarded as one of the oldest and most primitive types of construction of the South American Indians. Around the community house, plantings have been laid out (Ill. 37) and at the present time extend to the middle of the mountain slopes.

[174]

241

/210 cont./

594 family exists as a definite cell in that tribe, assuming all the
621 functions and all the specific responsibilities of that social entity. Thus, there exists the formal arrangement of marriage, which sanctions sexual contact between the spouses and guarantees procreation. There exists economic co-operation among the members of the nuclear family, which organizes work and apportions the necessary subsistance and, in this way,
[86] injects persistence in the family's living together. There are practically no tasks which exceed the capacity of the nuclear family and the children learn the way of life directly from their parents and elders.

594 The most visible center of the nuclear family is the fire
● 354 around which they eat and sleep. From here they go out to their work and, upon their return, reassemble at the fireside. After a long trip, the man takes the small sticks from his quiver and makes a fire; there is a new fire; a new home is established.

596 Each individual Sanemá belongs also to an extended family
621 made up according to the residence rules already explained. The local group /211/ consists of two or more of these extended families of the same bilateral kinsfolk and form /sic/ a band. This local group or band is the largest social unit to which
[619] a Sanemá belongs. The terms "subtribe" and "tribe" which we use are artificial terms lacking in real meaning for the Sanemá. But the band is definitely a familiar concept for him, one which he knows very well and with which he identifies. The band guarantees economic and social stability, and its well-being benefits the individual member, who feels tied to it by a multitude of family ties.

621 Each local group has innumerable enemies, while the circle
628 of friends is extremely small. Contact between all of one group with a neighboring group is rare, but does sometimes occur. They sometimes get together for commercial reasons or at funeral ceremonies, but their friendship is weak and unstable.

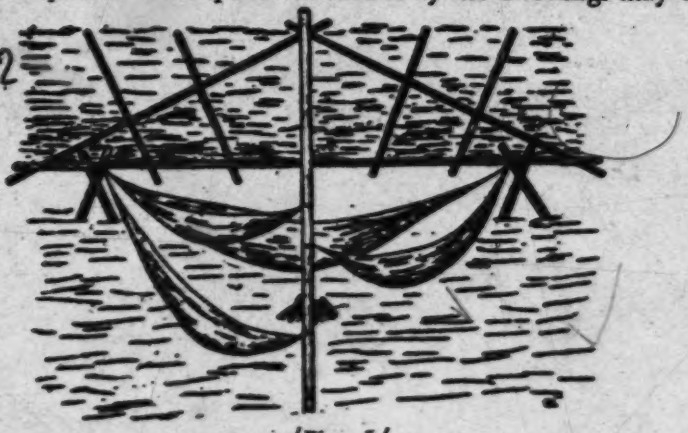
601 We were unable, for lack of an informant, to obtain a list of
582 kinship terms. Our impression is that a Hawaiian system is involved.
600 One may not marry a female cross or parallel cousin. There are

/459/

352 [364] Hammocks are hung triangularly from the posts which support the roof, and a fire is lighted in the center. If it is necessary, one hammock may be hung above another, in such a way that this triangle of two meters may shelter six persons (Fig. 5).

351 [361] These dwellings are located so as to form a circle, with their high and open fronts oriented toward the center of the patio. This space surrounded by the dwellings may or may not

352



/Fig. 5/

351 be completely cleared, but at least all of the small brush is removed from the front and immediate sides. Sometimes they also clear the ground of weeds for space of one meter behind the houses.

356 The dirt floor is cleaned by sweeping or scraping it at least once a day (although between one cleaning and another there might well accumulate on it many platano skins and other objects). The rubbish is piled up, using the hands or a piece of firewood; then it is carried and thrown outside of the central patio Great piles of rubbish and waste accumulate at the edge of these cleared areas. Sometimes they use a flat basket for carrying the rubbish, and very frequently it is carried with nothing but the hands, since they do not always have a basket available, or it might be in use for other jobs.

/468 cont./

Traveling and Transportation

487 They make almost all their trips on foot by paths and trails. Bridges are built over the largest rivers. Other rivers are waded or crossed on tree trunks.

/469/ New paths are marked by breaking branches in passing. On old roads they indicate the path or paths which have not been taken, leaving some object or a little pile of leaves at the entrance of same. A stick may be tied to an abandoned dwelling to indicate in what direction the former occupant has moved.
621 (A settlement may split up into groups when it abandons the
166 site in the area of the "conuco," and therefore this sign does not necessarily mean that the entire settlement has gone off in that direction.)

166 The Guaika /Waica/ travel frequently, but generally not
628 very far. The nearest settlement -- perhaps a day away -- is usually as far as they go. The settlement beyond this might be an enemy settlement, or at least not very friendly. Even neighboring settlements have such bad relations with one another that
628 they rarely visit among themselves. But the settlements which
574 are on friendly terms visit each other very frequently, and, when both live in the areas of the conucos, visitors come and go between them every few days.

574 The reasons for visiting are principally to see friends or to stay until their own "conuco" (which might be in a period of little production) begins to produce again.

Standards of Living

513
[342] The Guaika /Waica/ consider it essential to sleep every night under a roof. Thus, they always build some sort of shelter.

A fire is also essential. A Guaika will not sleep without
[354] a fire at night. He needs it to obtain heat and to protect himself from animals, and with the fire he feels safer from evil spirits.

9:Grelier K-5 (1951) 1957 SQ18 Yanoama SQ 18
Waica

Barker told us that it was no more than a temporary stopping-place on one of the jungle trails, no family ever remaining for more than a week. And so we found on our various return visits. The inhabitants were always different and their numbers varied considerably. Barker could not tell us how frequently these villages occur in the forests. He said he had been to only one other during his seven months' stay.

Every home possesses two or three calabashes, gourds and baskets, all dyed with ochre and some decorated with macaw or toucan feathers. All such objects of daily use have loops of string tied to them by which they can be hung from the hut's roof. Each family also has its little knives of capybara teeth. Firesticks are kept carefully packed away to keep them dry during disuse, as fire is always available from glowing embers that are never allowed to go out. We saw a number of baskets which women carry on their backs, but could not discover what they were used to carry—probably household utensils in the course of their journeyings. I could find no Waïka musical instrument, but in one hut, the only one with no hammock in it, I came across a sort of fibre cape hanging from a beam. As this was the only garment of any sort that I saw, it may well have been a ritual robe.

In every house there was at least one fire, and joints of unskinned peccary and branches of green bananas hung from many rafters. In an unornamented earthenware jar shaped like a bell we saw a peccary's head boiling whole with all its hair and skin. In another hut a child was eating a small alligator which had been grilled on the embers.

The Waïkas do not know salt and spat out the little we gave them in disgust. We thought that perhaps the huge quid of tobacco which the men, women and children keep under their lower lips might perhaps compensate for this deficiency. As with the Guaharibos, the women make up the quids every morning, impregnating them with their own saliva before passing them on to their mates.

Barker said he had never known Waïkas to build or use any sort of river-craft—not even a raft. He told us that the

11: Chagnon E-5 (1964-1968) 1968 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

342 some well-drained portion of the garden, such as a slight rise or hump. The four main posts of the individual house are then sunk into the ground, two short ones about 5 feet high at the back, and two longer ones about 10 feet high at the front (see Fig. 2–4, a and c). The rear posts are placed about 8 or 9 feet away from the front posts, and both pairs are approximately the same distance from each other as well. After these have been tamped securely into the holes, cross poles are lashed to the tops of them, and then long, slender saplings some 20 to 30 feet long are laid about a foot apart from each other on top of the cross poles and secured with vine lashings. Since the two rear posts are only about half as high as those at the front, the long roof poles protrude upward at an angle of 25 to 30 degrees toward the village clearing. A vine is then strung along the bottom of the long, protruding saplings, looped around each pole, and run the entire length of the house. The leaves used in the thatch have a long stem; the individual leaves are bent over the vine where the stem joins the leaf, and the first row of thatching goes on. When this row is completed, another vine, about 8 inches above the first one, is again strung along the entire length of the house and secured to each of the long saplings where it crosses them. The next row of thatch is then put in place; the leaf is inserted into the thatch of the first row of leaves and bent over the second vine. It overlaps the first row of leaves when it is bent down (see Fig. 2–5). The leaves are placed about an inch apart, resulting in a thoroughly impermeable roof. When the rows of leaves reach the two front main posts, a scaffolding is erected, and the roofing is extended to completely cover the entire length of the 30 foot saplings. A fringe of palm leaves is then hung from the top of the roof, adding a little decoration to the structure. An upright pole from the scaffolding is left to support the overhang, since the weight of the leaves might break the slender poles. These uprights, some 20 feet high, are spaced every 15 feet or so around the village.

361 At this point the village looks like a series of individual houses arranged in a more or less neat circle, a gap of about 3 feet separating the individual houses from each other. These gaps are roofed over by the men whose houses are adjacent to them, and the village then looks like a continuous roof surrounding an open plaza. Some of the gaps are not completely roofed over in order to leave additional exits; the roofing is started at the lower crossbeams, giving an exit about 3 to 5 feet high.

354 Small houses in some areas are simply round structures with a smoke hole at the top, such as the first house shown in Fig. 2–4a. The Yąnomamö *shabono* appears to have developed from such a structure by simply pulling the roof away from the center until the smoke hole grew so large that it, in effect, became a center plaza. Fig. 2–4a shows three house types that are found in Yąnomamö country. They are not so much distinct types as different sizes of a single type, the size being a function of the number of people the house shelters.

354 Where the village is located at a relatively high elevation, palm fronds or banana leaves are placed in front of the house to keep the smoke, and, hence, the heat, in the house. At lower elevations these palm fronds are usually found only at the east end of the *shabono*; they are used to keep the bright rays of the afternoon sun out of the house.

A new *shabono* is very attractive; it smells of freshly cut leaves, looks clean and tidy, and is cooled by the breeze as it drops down into this tiny hole in the otherwise uninterrupted canopy of the forest.

At the evening meal he refused to take a portion of the meat so that the others could have more. Later in the evening, he appeared at my hut begging for a can of sardines to satisfy his hunger for meat. He preferred to go hungry rather than risk the onus of being accused of poor marksmanship or stinginess.

Both sexes participate in the cooking, although the women do the greater share of it. Food preparation is not elaborate and rarely requires much labor, time, or paraphernalia. Spices are never used, although the salty ashes of a particular kind of tree are sometimes mixed with water to form a condiment of sorts. The food is dunked into the salty liquid and eaten.

Everyone eats in his hammock using his fingers for utensils. Some meals cannot be eaten from a reclining position, so the members of the family squat in a circle around the common dish. For example, large quantities of tiny fish are cooked by wrapping them in leaves and cooking them in the hot coals. When the fish are done, the package is spread open, and everyone shares its contents.

Animals are never skinned before cooking. They are merely put over the fire after their entrails have been removed, and roasted, head, fur, claws, and all. Most of the fur is singed off in the process of cooking. The animal is dismembered by hand. The head, particularly the head of a monkey, is highly prized because the brain is considered a delicacy. The most common meat is monkey, of which there are several varieties, so that this delicacy is enjoyed rather frequently by the Yąnomamö.

By the time supper is over it is nearly dark. The fires are prepared for the evening; if someone has allowed his own fire to go out during the day, he simply borrows two glowing sticks from a neighbor and rekindles his own hearth. The entrances to the village are sealed off with dry brush so that prowlers can not enter without raising an alarm. Before retiring to their hammocks, the Yąnomamö first sit on them and wipe the bottoms of their bare feet together. This rubs off most of the debris that has accumulated on them during the course of the day. Everyone sleeps naked and as close to the fire as possible. Despite the inevitable last-minute visiting, things are usually quiet in the village by the time it is dark.

Things are not always quiet after dark. If anyone in the village is sick, a shaman will chant to the malevolent spirits most of the night to exorcise them. Or, should anyone be mourning a dead kinsman, he or she will sob and wail long after the others have fallen asleep. Occasionally, a fight will break out between a husband and wife, and soon everybody in the village will be screaming, expressing opinions on the dispute. The shouting may continue sporadically for hours, dying down only to break out anew as someone gets a fresh insight into the problem. Once in a while someone gives a long, loud speech voicing his opinion on the world in general. Those who are interested may add their own comments, but the audience usually grumbles about the noise and falls asleep.

Status Differences and Activities

Daily activities, except those concerning gardening and visiting, do not vary much from season to season. Much of the variation that does occur is a function of one's age or sex, as was shown above.